WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A multi-function customer satisfaction survey device comprising:

a tip tray for holding a customer's payment for food in a restaurant; and

means within the tray for obtaining and storing responses from the customer regarding a level of customer satisfaction.

2. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey device of claim 1 wherein the means within the tray for obtaining and storing responses from the customer includes:

a visual display that presents customer satisfaction survey questions to the customer;

a keypad for entering the customer's responses to the survey questions;

a memory that stores the customer responses; and

a processor that sends survey questions to the display, collects responses from the keypad, and sends the responses to the memory.

3. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey device of claim 2 further comprising an external communications link in communication with the processor,

said processor retrieving the responses from the memory and downloading the responses to an external data collection unit utilizing the communications link.

4. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey device of claim 2 further comprising a paging transmitter in communication with the processor that pages a restaurant manager when a customer response meets predetermined criteria, and wherein the processor includes logic for determining whether a response meets the predetermined criteria.

5. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey device of claim 1 further comprising an electronic calculator within the tray.

6. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey device of claim 5 wherein the means within the tray for obtaining and storing responses from the customer includes:

a visual display that presents customer satisfaction survey questions to the customer;

a survey keypad for entering the customer's responses to the survey questions;

a memory that stores the customer responses; and

a processor that sends survey questions to the display, collects responses from the survey keypad, and sends the responses to the memory.

7. The multi-function customer satisfaction survey device of claim 6 wherein the calculator includes a numerical calculator keypad, and the processor collects inputs from the calculator keypad, performs calculations, and displays results of the calculations on the visual display.

8. A system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer regarding a level of customer satisfaction, said system comprising:

a tip tray that includes means within the tray for obtaining and storing responses from the customer regarding the level of customer satisfaction; and

a base unit that collects the responses from the tray.

9. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 8 wherein the tip tray also includes a calculator.

10. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 9 wherein the means within the tray for obtaining and storing responses from the customer includes:

a visual display that presents customer satisfaction survey questions to the customer;

a survey keypad for entering the customer's responses to the survey questions;

a memory that stores the customer responses; and

a tray processor that sends survey questions to the display, collects responses from the keypad, and sends the responses to the memory.

11. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 10 further comprising an external communications link in communication with the tray processor, said tray processor retrieving the responses from the memory and downloading the responses to the base unit utilizing the communications link.

12. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 11 further comprising a paging transmitter in communication with the tray processor that pages a restaurant manager when a customer response meets predetermined criteria, and wherein the tray processor

includes logic for determining whether a response meets the predetermined criteria.

13. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 12 wherein the base unit includes a battery recharger connected to a power pin, and the tray includes a rechargeable battery connected to a power receptacle, and the battery is recharged by stacking the tray on the base unit so that the power pin on the base unit is in contact with the power receptacle on the tray.

14. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 13 wherein the base unit also includes a base unit processor connected to a data pin, and the tray includes a data receptacle connected to the external communications link, said base unit processor using the communications link to program the tray processor with survey questions, and to download from the tray memory, the customer responses.

15. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 14 further comprising a plurality of trays that stack on top each other on the base unit, each of said trays having a power pin and a data pin that align with a power receptacle and a data

receptacle, respectively, on an adjacently stacked tray, whereby the recharger recharges the battery in all of the stacked trays simultaneously, the base unit processor programs all of the stacked trays simultaneously, and the base unit processor downloads customer responses from all of the stacked trays simultaneously.

16. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 15 further comprising an analysis function remotely located from the base unit, wherein the base unit includes a communications port through which the collected responses are communicated to the analysis function.

17. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 16 wherein the analysis function is resident on a personal computer (PC), and the communications port comprises an RS232 interface.

18. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 17 wherein the analysis function is resident on a remote computer, and the communications port communicates with the remote computer over a global computer network.

19. The system for obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 18 further comprising a plurality of base units connected in series to a smart base, said smart base being connected to the analysis function.

20. A method of obtaining and storing responses from a customer regarding a level of customer satisfaction, said method comprising the steps of:

presenting customer survey questions to the customer on a display screen mounted in a tip tray;

collecting the customer's responses to the survey questions with a survey keypad mounted in the tip tray; and

storing the customer responses in a memory in the tip tray.

21. The method of obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 20 further comprising downloading the customer responses to a database.

22. The method of obtaining and storing responses from a customer of claim 20 further comprising offering the customer a chance to win a prize in exchange for participating in the customer satisfaction survey.